

REMARKS

Claims

Claims 1-16 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 3, 6 and 9 have been amended. Claims 10-16 have been newly added. No new matter has been added.

Priority Acknowledgement

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging the priority papers submitted on October 24, 2005.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Vermeulen et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,810,379 in view of the newly applied reference of Farrett, U.S. Patent No. 5,636,325. Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection in view of the foregoing amendments and for the following reasons.

Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 3 and 6 to include that which Applicants regard as the invention.

In claim 1, the voice synthesizing method has been amended to set forth that a speech style is selected for a voice to be synthesized and prosody data of a stereotypical sentence is selected that corresponds to the selected voice contents of the stereotypical sentence to be synthesized and which is in the same language as the voice contents, from a speech style dictionary which corresponds to the selected speech style. The selected prosody data is input to a voice synthesizer that performs the voice synthesis of the selected prosody data and outputs a

voice of the stereotypical sentence of the selected speech style, according to claim 1.

Claim 3, which is directed to the voice synthesizer of the invention, has been amended to set forth that the memory stores a speech style dictionary in which speech style information and prosody data are associated with each other. Specifically, claim 3 sets forth that the speech style information specifies a speech style for a voice to be synthesized; and the prosody data is set forth to be of a plurality of stereotypical sentences each of which corresponds to a predetermined voice contents and which is in the same language as the voice contents. Further, claim 3 sets forth that the voice synthesizing part selects the prosody data of the stereotypical sentence which corresponds to the pointed voice contents and the pointed speech style from the speech style dictionary and converts the prosody data to a voice signal.

In claim 6, the prosody data distributing method has been amended to include receiving an input specifying a speech style and to set forth that the prepared speech style dictionary corresponds to a specified speech style which includes prosody data of a plurality of stereotypical sentences, each of which corresponds to a predetermined voice contents and is in the same language as the voice contents. Claim 6 has further been amended to set forth that the server and the terminal device can perform voice synthesis of a stereotypical sentence, when an input of specifying the voice contents and the speech style is input, using the supplied speech style dictionary.

Applicants have added new claims 10-16, which are dependent claims. Accordingly, claims 1-16 are pending. Applicants respectfully assert that the claims are patentable over the references of record.

In particular, Vermeulen discloses only text-to-speech synthesis in a client/server type

speech synthesis system. Vermeulen discloses an example of processing performed by the voice synthesizer. Vermeulen does not disclose synthesizing speech with a specific speech style. Farrett is relied upon for disclosing a selection of dialect semantics to be output as synthesized speech. However, Farrett does not disclose stereotypical sentences, which are defined in the present invention as being of the type identified in Figure 4, for example. In the present invention, a user identifies the voice contents of a type of sentence to be voice synthesized. A speech style dictionary having a speech style and prosody data corresponding to the voice contents are identified and used in the voice synthesis. Accordingly, the voice is synthesized based on the selected prosody data and the voice contents that are identified so that speech is synthesized with the speech style that is selected. Further, the stereotypical sentence itself is synthesized according to the selected speech style even if the content of the speech has the same meaning.

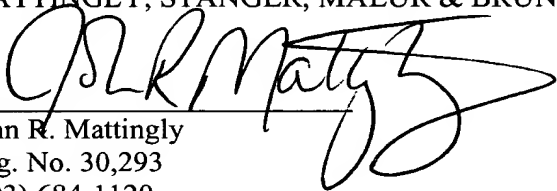
The combination of Vermeulen and Farrett does not render the claimed invention obvious since neither of the references discloses selecting prosody data of stereotypical sentences that corresponds to selected voice contents, as set forth in the independent claims. Further, the combination of selecting prosody data of stereotypical sentences that corresponds to selected voice contents with selecting voice contents of a stereotypical sentence to be synthesized and synthesizing the selected prosody data and outputting a voice of the selected speech style, as set forth in claim 1 is not shown or suggested by the references. Therefore, the claims are patentable over the combination of Vermeulen and Farrett and the 35 U.S.C. §103 rejection should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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